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Subject

Far East (Gen 1)

(Laos - Pt 12)

MINISTER
PERSONAL MINUTE

SERIAL NO. R. 220/61

SECRET

FOREIGN SECRETARY

Laos

I have been thinking over our conversation. It occurs to me to wonder if the situation of the Laos Conference is not very similar to that of the Tests Conference. Here again if Berlin is settled we may hope for some progress; and if it is not the war in Laos will seem very small beer. So ought not our tactics to be to keep the Conference going as long as we can, adjourning it from time to time if necessary. Of course we would hope that the three Princes might manage to settle it between them. But our purpose would be to keep on talking for we know that the end of the Conference would mean the beginning of vast new expenditures for whatever version of Plan Five was by then in favour.

In putting this suggestion to Rusk could you not also point out that, whether by Soviet design or unlucky accident, we and the Americans are in danger of getting entangled in all sorts of troubles around the world just as Berlin is coming to a head. These entanglements must please the Russians very much; they want to lead us further into the net and so we should try to keep clear of it.

Copied sent Sir N. Brook
517

HAROLD MACMILLAN,